

Hartford Stage, Hartford, CT

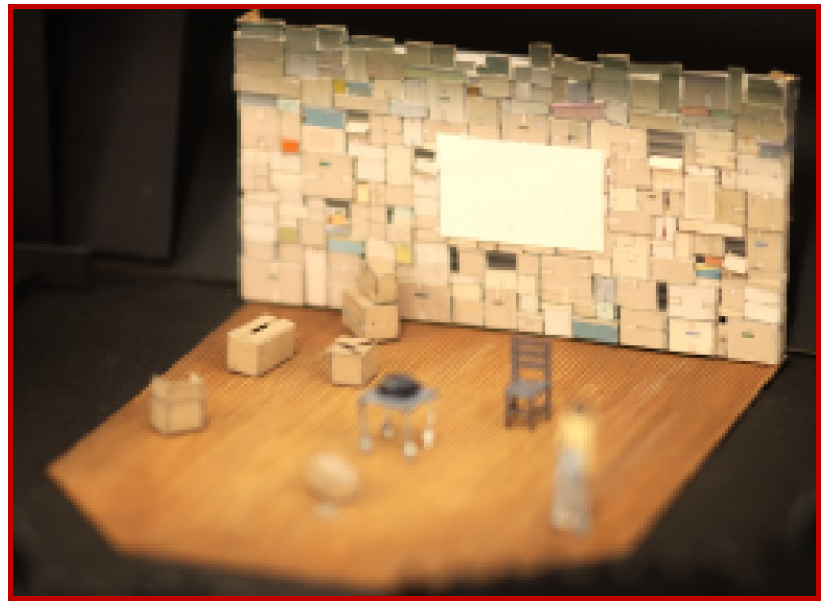
2.5 Minute Ride by Lisa Kron. Directed by Zoë Golub-Sass.

Reviewed by J. Peter Bergman.

“My father has so many incredible stories. . .and I wanted to make a record.”

Lisa Kron, who also wrote “Fun Home” and “Well” has created a very personal memoir-play about her father and their exceptional relationship. An early survivor of the Nazi’s incursion into Poland, the man created a whole life story in Connecticut and the mid-west which has served as inspiration for Lisa and so many others. This play, a monodrama lasting about 79 minutes, is both very funny and very moving. It is being performed at Hartford Stage by the incredible actress Lena Kaminsky. I don’t always recommend solo performances but this one is that rare exception. It’s a must see!

She gathers the audience into her private sphere and never lets us go. There wasn’t a single moment when I wasn’t captured by Lisa’s stories about her trip to Germany and Poland with her



Judy Gallen’s set; Photo: T. Charles Erickson



Lena Kaminsky; Photo: T. Charles Erickson

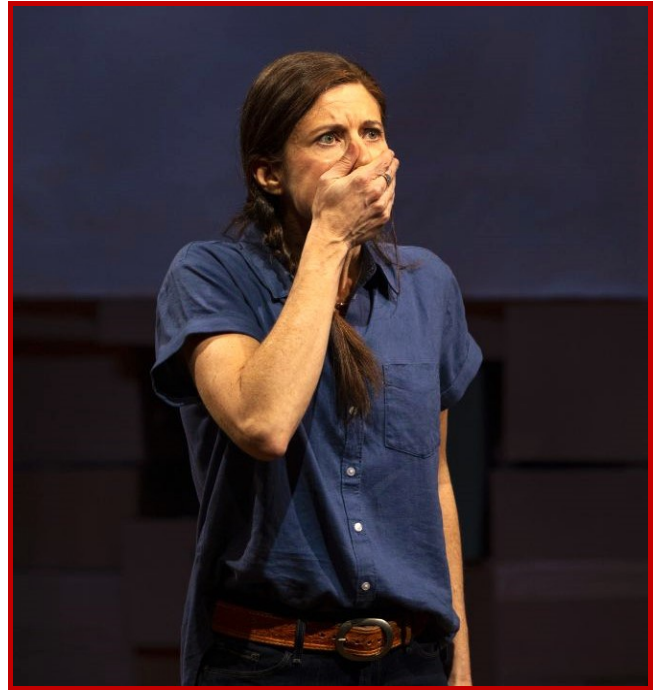
Dad, about their historic experiences and their family excursions to amusement parks where she would join him on roller coaster rides that actually terrified her but pleased him. For two and a half minutes he would exult in the freedom he could feel with his daughter at his side. Lisa, the main character in this story, would try to understand the man she loved but could never quite manage to make him as real as he was.

As the creative person Lisa Kron is, she is attempting to construct a film about him and his life. She amiably explains his special qualities that have ruled her mind for decades. She delves into history, his history and her own history in an attempt to elucidate what it is that keeps him in the center of her mind. She almost gets there, but

like so many men his ultimate fascination for her is critically withheld from her. She does her very best and it is fascinating to watch her and listen to her try to make it all real. She comes so close that at the end of the play you settle back, thinking and hoping that she has succeeded in her efforts, though you know she has probably missed something essential. Still you hope for her, you pray for her, you support her with your heart and your mind. It's an incredible moment when the play comes to its conclusion and there is obviously more to discover.

Lena Kaminsky is perfect in the role. It is clear from the get-go that she is really into the part and into the quest for discovery. She is so honest and real in the role of Lisa you obviously believe that each performance must bring her closer to the author's quest for truth. It is a performance like no other and it is an hour or so of humanity, not just acting.

Director Zoë Golub-Sass has used the expansive stage in Hartford extremely well. Her Lisa moves with the freedom of a woman who has no secrets to hide as she speaks of her friend Peggy, of her father and of herself. Each platform and seat on the stage plays its part in the proceedings. Lighting Designer Daisy Long has accompanied Golub-Sass on this staging journey and the entire show seems to have only reality to keep it alive. It is very theatrical but it does not scream "a play" as much as it keeps us informed that a play can be reality and reality an ongoing play. There are only two weeks left to see this special work and I suggest you make your way to Hartford Stage to see it while you can. You may not see its like again.



Lena Kaminsky; Photo: T. Charles Erickson

+ 06/08/2025 +

2.5 Minute Ride plays at Hartford Stage, 50 Church Street, Hartford, Connecticut through June 23. For information and tickets go to Hartfordstage.org or call 860-527-5151.